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TUBEROUS-ROOTED

Begonia

HOWARD R. RICH • ATLANTIC, MAINE



CAMELLIA - FLOWERED

Tuberous - Rooted BEGONIAS

by

HOWARD R. RICH

Swans Island, Home of Rich Begonias, Atlantic, Maine





CAMELLIA - FLOWERED

RICH'S TUBEROUS - ROOTED BEGONIAS



AS A HOBBY I have, for half a lifetime, been growing the world's most glorious flower on lovely wind-swept Swans Island, off the coast of Maine, and have found health and happiness in the pleasant work. In fact, the work has been so pleasant and the tubers grown here so superior to any I could buy that I finally decided to devote my entire time to growing and selling these super Begonia tubers.

The friendly soil of our Island, assisted by the clean salt air of the Maine coast, produces tubers that are not only larger than those grown elsewhere but they are absolutely healthy and so packed with vigor that we never have to worry about failures.

The illustrations in this booklet are of flowers from Rich tubers grown here on Swans Island, and if you have not tried Rich Begonias, a trial order this year will convince you of their superiority.

Complete planting instructions are enclosed with each and every shipment.

From July 15 to October 15 Begonias are in bloom, and Begonia lovers will find a trip to Swans Island worth while during bloom-time. The flowers are at their very best during August and September. Visitors are welcome every day during the season. Directions for reaching Swans Island will be found on page 23.

We tender our sincere thanks to those customers who have so kindly recommended their friends to us, and we shall constantly do our utmost to retain this confidence in our firm and its products.

HOWARD R. RICH
Atlantic, Maine



FASCINATION OR CRISPA MARGINATA

TUBEROUS - ROOTED BEGONIAS

ALTHOUGH known for quite a long time, the Tuberous-rooted Begonia is just beginning to be appreciated by the flower-lovers of America.

Seeds and tubers of *Begonia boliviensis* were first sent from Bolivia to England in 1847. Its small flowers were not particularly attractive, but by crossing and recrossing, with other species from Bolivia and Peru over the years, the bloom has been improved until we now have glorious flowers of many colors and shades, with exhibition flowers up to 8 inches and over in diameter. Although it is so little known in this country, in England catalogues of specialists list scores of named varieties under the double types alone, and there are a number of distinct types besides the doubles.

There seems to be an idea that these Begonias are difficult subjects, caused probably by the exotic appearance of the glorious flowers, some of which look as if moulded from wax, others so velvety that they seem to be cut from royal cloth.

Instead of being difficult, they are easy to grow, and, given a proper location, rich soil, and sufficient moisture, they will be happy with little care; on the other hand, as they thrive in the shade, they are the answer to the gardener's prayer for something to occupy the garden's many difficult shady places. Light they must have, of course, but not direct sunlight. The north side of a wall, hedge, or building, under trees, provided the branches are not too close to the ground, and under lath shades, are the places they do the best, but there must be air-circulation.

The Begonia blooms are in clusters of three, one large male flower in the center and two small single female flowers, one on either side. Remove the small flowers as soon as they appear, just as one disbuds roses or chrysanthemums, and the center flower will have a better chance to develop. This disbudding will make a world of difference in the size and perfection of the flower, and will make it last longer.

While, under ordinary culture, the singles, doubles and Camellias will reach 5 to 6 inches in diameter, exhibition flowers can, by skilful care and attention, be made to reach 8 inches or more across.

In most types the color-range is large, running through all the shades of red, pink, orange, and yellow, with lovely scarlet, crimson, cardinal, apricot, various shades of salmon, rose and the clearest, cleanest of whites.



BEGONIAS IN NECESSARY LIGHT SHADE

The above picture shows a portion of a bed composed almost entirely of Camellia-flowered Begonias of the same form and color as those shown in color on the front cover. {In fact, the blooms used in the color-plate were picked from this bed.}

THE MULTIFLORAS are recent introductions which are sure to become popular because of the unusual abandon with which they produce flowers all summer and until frost stops them in the fall. Only 6 inches high, with much smaller foliage than the larger types, they make fine pot-plants for summer and fall, and will get along with less water than their larger relatives. Their colors are scarlet, fiery red, rose, coppery yellow, and yellow. A Multiflora Begonia in full bloom is a plant any gardener will be proud of.

We have only a very limited supply of these new Multifloras for 1939.



MULTIFLORA



CRISTATA OR CRESTED



FIMBRIATA OR CARNATION - FLOWERED



The World's Most Glorious Flower

TUBEROUS-ROOTED BEGONIA

Camellia-flowered Types





PENDULA OR LLOYDI

Begonia pendula, or *Lloydi* as it is becoming known, has been developed to the point where, with flowers up to 3 inches across, it is just about the world's finest plant for summer hanging-baskets or shaded window-boxes.

Three tubers are about right for a hanging-basket. Each tuber will put out one, two, or three stems, which should be pinched back when about 10 inches long; this will cause them to branch freely, each branch blooming and extending itself until the drooping mass of stems, foliage and flowers extends from 2 to 3 feet.

Our illustration shows the inflorescence from three tubers.

B. pendula also displays its beauty to good effect in a shaded rockery where the stems and flowers may drape themselves over a rock.

OUR BREEDING STOCK

In order to keep our Begonias as near perfection as possible it is necessary to do considerable hybridizing each year, and we use for this purpose tubers which produced the finest plants and flowers the previous year.

This stock, having been used once for breeding purposes, is then ready for sale, as the previous year's hybrids will be ready for breeding next year.

The pedigreed stock shown below was raised from seed of hand-pollenized flowers of the Rich strain. Although raised from seed sown last winter, these flowers, in August, were all 6 inches or more in diameter, and selected blooms of these were used in our 1938 breeding work.

As will be seen by the picture, the quantity of tubers in this planting is quite limited, but the flowers were so fine that we have kept the tubers separate and offer them at \$10.00 per dozen. They are all of the Camellia type, and, as there are only a few hundred of them, they will not last long. Orders will be filled in rotation as long as they last.





SINGLE



CRISPA



THE DIFFERENT TYPES

CAMELLIA-FLOWERED, or Double Begonias, are lovely, big, double flowers, their heavy petals so carefully arranged that the bloom closely resembles that of *Camellia japonica*, wherefore the name. There is a slight variation in the form of these flowers, and we have already noted over a dozen distinct types in our Camellia-flowered mixture, but as these forms have not been separated, we can offer them in mixed forms only. There is a wide range of colors to be found among the Camel-

lia-flowered types. All the shades of salmon, pink, rose, apricot, scarlet, crimson, yellow, and orange are represented, in addition to pure whites. We can supply any of these colors.

CRISPA. A Single Begonia with edges so deeply cut and crimped and frilled that the flower has the appearance of icy crispness. There is an ethereal quality to the chaste Crispa flowers which is unapproached by other types in this lovely family and which makes them especially desirable for particular decorative arrangements. They come in shades of pink, yellow, salmon, and white.

CRISTATA or CRESTED. These are single flowers with each of the lightly fluted petals bearing crested growths resembling the comb decorations of a rose-combed rooster. More often than not the crest is of a different tint than the rest of the petal. It sounds fantastic but the flowers are really beautiful and the cut-flowers make gorgeous table decorations. Blends of crimson, salmon, apricot, orange and rose will be found.

FASCINATION {*B. crispa marginata*}. A dainty flower with the edges beautifully cut and frilled, but not so pronounced as in the true Crispa type. The color is white with a narrow edge of pale carmine, or pale yellow with a pink edge. Because these colored edges are soft tints and not harsh tones, the flowers attract attention without jarring the senses, and a solid bed of this one variety presents an unforgettable garden picture. Break off a flower and float it in a clear glass bowl for an exquisite table decoration.

FIMBRIATA. The Carnation-flowered Begonias are an interestingly different type, having fully double flowers with short, deeply serrated, fringed petals, the mature bloom really resembling a carnation. It is one of the varieties you will just have to have once you have seen a fully developed flower. The colors are pink, salmon, apricot, and white.

MULTIFLORA BEGONIAS are low plants only about 6 inches high which literally hide their foliage with masses of bloom from early summer until frost. The flowers are from 1½ to 3 inches across and are in shades of scarlet, fiery red, rose, yellow, and coppery yellow.

NARCISSAEFLORA. One of the newest types, with center petals arranged somewhat like the trumpet of a daffodil. The flowers are quite attractive in their dainty pastel shades.

PENDULA {Lloydi}. Very popular for window-boxes and hanging-baskets on a shaded porch or in the conservatory and for shaded rock-gardens. It is a type with pendulous stems and quantities of single or double flowers in shades of orange, salmon, pink, and white. The flowers are smaller than those of the previously mentioned type, averaging something less than 3 inches in diameter. We do not know of any plant that will produce such quantities of bloom in a box or basket as these rapidly spreading Pendula Begonias.

ROSEBUD BEGONIAS are simply a variation of the Camellia-flowered type. The bloom, in its early development, appears much like a half-open rose, and at this stage is truly beautiful. So far, the Rosebud type has been developed only in shades of pink.

SINGLE. Because of the immensity of their flat surfaces, the plain Singles are the most spectacular of the family. The flowers vary somewhat in form, and the color-range is wide so that a bed of mixed colors presents a dazzling picture. The colors are apricot, orange, salmon-pink, rose, crimson, and white, and the sizes are really fantastic.





BEGONIAS UNDER LATH SHADE

This picture shows the vigor of the plants, the richness of the lovely foliage, and perfection of the great flowers when grown under lath shade. The bed in the foreground contains all white flowers, while those across the walk are in shades of pink.

Flowers for cutting will be much finer grown in this manner.



CAMELLIA - FLOWERED

TUBEROUS-ROOTED BEGONIA PRICES

Prices of all types except Multiflora and Narcissae flora

Large tubers 6 for \$1.75; \$3.00 per doz.; \$25.00 per 100
Extra-large tubers . . 6 for \$3.00; \$5.00 per doz.; \$40.00 per 100

MULTIFLORA

Regular stock 6 for \$2.00; \$3.50 per doz.
Selected types 6 for \$2.75; \$5.00 per doz.

NARCISSAEFLORA

Large tubers 6 for \$2.25; \$4.00 per doz.
Extra-large tubers . . 6 for \$4.00; \$7.50 per doz.

ALL TUBERS ARE SHIPPED POSTPAID

We have a limited quantity of the Camellia-flowered type which have been selected because of the extra-large size and especially fine form of the flowers. Every one of these should produce flowers of prize-winning quality. While they last they are \$7.50 per doz.

Tubers from the special breeding stock shown on page 15. \$10.00 per doz.

We sold out of Tubers very early last year so suggest early ordering to avoid disappointment.

Please write your name and address plainly. Every year many requests for catalogues are ignored because we cannot make out the names and addresses.

CULTURAL SUGGESTIONS

The tubers should not be put outdoors until the ground and air have become warm, so for early bloom they should be started inside in pots or boxes of moist, but not wet, sand and peat moss, transplanting to the garden when conditions are right. Barely cover the tubers when starting or transplanting.

Equal portions of old cow-manure, leaf-mold, sand, peat moss and loam, make ideal Begonia soil, or Swans Island Begonia Soil will save the trouble of preparation.

As the stems are very brittle, staking will save a lot of bloom, and pinching will produce bushier plants with more flowers.

They require shade and plenty of water, but no cultivation, as the roots are too near the surface.

Complete instructions will be enclosed with each shipment.

Atlantic, Maine

Date _____

Your Name _____

VERY PLAIN

Post Office _____ P. O. Box _____

Express Address _____

1st DIFFERENT FROM P. O.

County _____ State _____

Street No. _____ Forwarded by _____

Amount Enclosed _____ Cash \$ _____ Money Order \$ _____

Supt.'s Name _____ Draft or Check \$ _____

STATE HOW MUCH MONEY YOU ENCLOSE

SEE OTHER SIDE

SWANS ISLAND BEGONIA SOIL

So many customers have asked for the soil-mixture we use that we are this year putting it up in 25-, 50- and 100-pound moisture-proof bags at 25 lbs. \$1.50; 50 lbs. \$2.50; 100 lbs. \$4.00.

These will be shipped by Express or Freight collect or if sufficient postage is sent with the order the 25- and 50-pound bags can be sent by Parcel Post.

A 6-inch pot of this mixture under each tuber and a light mulching in July will insure quality flowers.

HOW TO GET HERE

From June 15 to September 15 there are Sunday excursions from Rockland with a three-hour stop at Swans Island. These boats leave Rockland at 8 A.M., and returning leave the Island at 2.30 P.M., providing a pleasant sail and an opportunity to see these glorious flowers in bloom. The regular boat leaves Rockland at 1.30 P.M., weekdays, returning early the next morning, and necessitates staying over a day in order to see the flowers, but as over-night accommodations are limited, the Sunday excursions are recommended.

Visitors in private boats may land at our private dock on the north side of the Island any day during the season.



THE RICH HOMESTEAD ON SWANS ISLAND



CAMELLIA - FLOWERED TYPES GROWN UNDER LATH SHADE

The flowers in this picture, without any forcing whatever, were all 6 inches or over in diameter. What would they be if forced for exhibition?

HOWARD R. RICH • Atlantic, Maine
